

Oral Health Integration for Physicians **FAQ**

What is oral health integration?

Oral health integration means including oral health in your medical practice. PacificSource encourages physicians to integrate oral health into their practice.

Why should I consider oral health integration for my practice?

Oral health affects overall health. Despite collective efforts and for a variety of reasons, too many people go without the dental care they need to be optimally healthy. Oral disease negatively impacts people throughout their lives and can result in serious health consequences for:

- Children
- People who are pregnant
- People with chronic diseases (like diabetes and cardiovascular disease), including behavioral health conditions
- Seniors

Interprofessional collaboration is critical to improving oral health and overall health. Studies show that people are more likely to follow through with healthy behaviors (such as dental care) when their physician tells them to do so.

What specific activities can I participate in that will help me integrate oral health into my practice?

Consistent with the [Oral Health Delivery Framework](#), integrating oral health into patient care can include an array of activities along a spectrum.

- Asking patients about their oral health and educating patients about how improving oral health improves overall health.
- Referring patients to dental care and following up with them about their dental visit.
- Providing your patients with toothbrushing kits. New brushes, floss, and toothpaste promote daily preventive care.
- Completing oral health assessments with your patients. PacificSource reimburses physicians for this service, consistent with our policy and applicable rules.
- Applying fluoride varnish. PacificSource reimburses physicians for this service, consistent with our policy and applicable rules.
- Establishing bidirectional communication with your patient's dental provider or dental care organization to coordinate care, share care plans and lab results, and ensure referrals and care gaps are addressed.
- Partnering with a dental care organization to host mobile dentistry/[teledentistry](#) at your practice.

Learn more

PacificSource encourages healthcare providers to consider integrating oral health into their patient practice, including teledentistry if appropriate.

To be connected with a dental care organization to discuss partnership interests, contact PacificSource's Oregon Provider Service team:

Phone

Direct (541) 246-1457

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What resources exist to help me learn more about oral health integration?

The following resources may help you learn more and transform your practice to integrating oral health.

Training, recommendations, and position within statements

Oral Health Training for Physicians

- Smiles for Life – A national oral health curriculum new.smilesforlifeoralhealth.org
- First Tooth orohc.org/first-tooth

Recommendations and Research

- U.S Preventative Services Task Force – Dental Caries in Children from Birth through Age 5 Years tinyurl.com/y33cpv8m
- American Academy of Pediatrics – Maintaining and Improving the Oral Health of Young Children pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/134/6/1224
- Oral Health Care During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement tinyurl.com/y6y6q92m (PDF)
- Periodontal Disease and Pregnancy Outcomes: Overview of Systematic Reviews tinyurl.com/yy6zx96x
- Periodontal Treatment and Diabetes tinyurl.com/yxsusnrx
- Periodontitis and Atherosclerotic Cardiovascular Disease tinyurl.com/y4lvg2hd

Resources for integrating oral health into your practice

- American Academy of Pediatrics – Oral Health Prevention Primer ilikemyteeth.org/ohpp
- Qualis Health – Organized, Evidence-Based Care: Oral Health Integration tinyurl.com/y5z37ctf (PDF)
- Medical Oral Expanded Care Initiative (MORE Care) and Interprofessional Practice tinyurl.com/yyh3r27f
- National Network for Oral Health Access – A User’s Guide for Implementation of Interprofessional Oral Health Core Clinical Competencies: Results of a Pilot Project tinyurl.com/y4dcwlf7 (PDF)
- PacificSource: How Teledentistry Can Add Value to Your Practice tinyurl.com/y5zo8kaj

Patient educational resources

- Protect Tiny Teeth Toolkit tinyurl.com/y7fvjqc
- Smiles For Life Oral Health Patient Education Resources new.smilesforlifeoralhealth.org/resources/patient-education-tools
- Brush, Book, Bed tinyurl.com/hx4xuld
- Central Oregon Health Council – Oral Health Diabetes Resources cohealthcouncil.org/oral-health-diabetes
- Oregon Oral Health Coalition Pregnancy and Oral Health orohc.org/pregnancy